

SHAMAN'S HEART PROGRAM

by Byron Metcalf, PhD

Byron Metcalf, Ph.D. is a transpersonal guide and educator, shamanic practitioner, researcher, teacher, and professional musician. For more than 20 years, Byron has been involved in consciousness research and spiritual development, specializing in the transformative potential of music and sound and expanded states of consciousness. As a drummer, percussionist, and recording engineer, Byron produces music for deep inner exploration, breathwork, shamanic journeywork, body-oriented therapies, various meditation practices, and the healing arts. The Shaman's Heart with Hemi Sync® (featuring Steve Roach) was awarded the 2006 Visionary Award for "Best Meditation/Healing CD." In addition to The Shaman's Heart, Byron has collaborated with Steve Roach, Mark Seelig, and others on several critically acclaimed CDs including The Serpent's Lair, Wachuma's Wave, Mantram, the Fever Dream series, Nada Terma, and Dream Tracker. Byron is the creator of The Shaman's Heart Program and is the founding director of HoloShamanic Strategies, LLC, offering spiritual and shamanic healing services and experiential educational programs.

For several years I have been working on an approach to psycho-spiritual development and healing that combines all facets of my life's work into a cohesive and unified theory and practice. What finally evolved is "*The SHAMAN'S HEART Program: The Path of Authentic Power, Purpose & Presence*"—a totally unique and practical integration of shamanic practice, transpersonal psychology, ancient wisdom teachings, various contemporary methods of spiritual growth and development, and music, drumming, sound, and sound technologies. The overriding aim of *SHAMAN'S HEART* Program is to support people in fully developing their authentic power, purpose, and presence—their capacity for soul-based and heart-centered living—and, from a larger perspective, contributing to the healing and maturity of humanity as a whole. I call this integral process "*HoloShamanic*," which means to see, recognize, and experience wholeness and completeness. What I found lacking in the current literature on shamanism and contemporary shamanic practice is a detailed, structured approach for developing the heart in a way that supports living fully in the world with power, purpose, and presence. This requires an approach that addresses all levels of the human experience and development: the personal, interpersonal, and transpersonal—all of which are incorporated into the *SHAMAN'S HEART* Program.

The *SHAMAN'S HEART* Program is oriented toward fully balancing, harmonizing, and synchronizing the human bio-energetic field. When balance, harmony, and synchronization are achieved, our innate, inner-healing resources and capacities are activated and mobilized. Over time, healing and resolution of our various conditions, patterns, and concerns can occur as a

result of our continuing the work in a focused, disciplined manner. In this approach, the development of the heart and the embodied Soul is not about trying to make things easier, more loving, or pleasant, but rather to bring healing and development to what is needed. When we are engaging life with authentic power, purpose and presence, the heart functions like an alchemical chamber. The flame of the heart, which is an expression of strength and will in this work, will consume and burn away that which isn't real, true, or authentic. A primary objective is to develop the quality of receptivity—the capacity to make room for and hold a larger field of experience. We learn how to “hold the space” for ourselves in a way that is conscious, present, and mature. It is about quenching the thirst of the Soul to know itself completely; to develop and express itself fully. A foundational assumption of the program is that it is not enough to simply open or awaken the heart—it has to develop and mature.

The *SHAMAN'S HEART* program is evolutionary in that one's development continually unfolds in an organic and uniquely personal way. More fundamentally, this approach is holonistic, meaning that each aspect, quality, and potential of the heart is in itself a whole system embedded in other whole systems. For example, the quality of strength is, in itself, a whole system that is also embedded in the quality of compassion. Similarly, compassion is a whole system that is embedded in the qualities of intelligence, will, openness, and so on. As such, the heart is the cosmological center of the human experience in that the whole and the parts are an interconnected matrix of evolving maturity and wholeness. One's understanding, knowledge, skill, and ability to live in a fully embodied heart-centered manner continues to increase, deepen, and expand as one goes deeper into the program's practices, training, and teachings.

The *SHAMAN'S HEART* Program and TMI

There are many wisdom traditions that serve the TMI community. In addition to Monroe's inner exploration via Hemi-Sync, there are other doorways that are now being added that focus on developing the wisdom and intelligence of the heart. The *SHAMAN'S HEART* program is unique in this regard in that it combines Monroe's sound technology with music that I have created, with drumming, and with the *SHAMAN'S HEART* teachings in a way that is specifically designed to induce and support expanded states of awareness and shamanic states of consciousness. The result is a new level of synergistic effectiveness that integrates the synchronization of brain wave activity with the body and heart, thus opening fully to the intelligence and wisdom of the heart, the body, and higher mind. To me this is full transpersonal awareness.

The Role of the Drum (Pun Intended)

The drum is one of the oldest instruments. Cross-culturally, it is the primary tool that many shamans use for accessing expanded/altered states of consciousness to facilitate healing and

divinatory work. In the *SHAMAN'S HEART* program, I use various drums and percussion instruments primarily at subdivisions of 220 beats per minute (bpm)—the tempo that has been most utilized in various formal research studies. Several EEG studies have shown that continuous drumming (also referred to as auditory driving) for 12-15 minutes with tempos ranging from 180bpm to 240bpm will consistently produce theta-level brain wave activity. Subjective reports from these studies include floating and out-of-body experiences (OBEs), increased relaxation and reduction in pain, visitation experiences, deep connection with the natural world, visual imagery that is associated with the shamanic journey experience, enhanced problem solving abilities, increased trust in one's inner guidance, and so on. A resting heartbeat of 55 bpm is considered very healthy for most adults, and, from my experience, 55bpm can easily support the awareness of our connection with the earth (earth-planetary consciousness) and the "heartbeat of Mother Earth." All of the music tracks from my CD *The Shaman's Heart with Hemi-Sync* utilize subdivisions of 220bpm and these (along with music from my other shamanic Metamusic® CDs) are incorporated into the program.

In the *SHAMAN'S HEART* program six-day residential retreat at TMI, participants experience the following:

- Expanded and advanced *SHAMAN'S HEART* program exercises that utilize specially created Hemi-Sync mixes, conducted in both individual and group formats.
- In addition to my recorded music and drumming, throughout the workshop I use live drums and percussion, as well as various shamanic tools to enhance and amplify the effectiveness of group exercises.
- Participants explore in depth:
 - a) the role of intention in spiritual and psychological development
 - b) the transformative potential of non-ordinary states of consciousness
 - c) the role of music, sound, and sound technologies in human development and the healing process
 - d) an expanded model of the human psyche and its implications for personal healing and global transformation
 - e) developing the intelligence and wisdom of the heart
- Participants learn how to access non-physical intelligence and guidance that is both personal and objective. Exercises include utilizing a classic shamanic approach for making personal contact with the natural world and individual and group exercises that focus on planetary and global healing and transformation.
- Participants also experience HoloShamanic Breathwork—a powerful strategy for directly contacting the intrinsic healing power within each individual. This method focuses on utilizing one's own inner wisdom and various nonphysical helpers, guides, and allies in order to reveal, release, and transform the patterns and barriers that inhibit and stifle our growth and creative energies. It can help one access all levels of human experience including the biographical,

perinatal, and transpersonal realms of consciousness, and the upper, middle, and lower worlds of the shamanic landscape.

- During the entire retreat, emphasis is placed on integrative methods and practices that participants can “take home” with them to support their continued learning, growth, and development.

The *SHAMAN'S HEART* program is ideal for both the seasoned and beginning shamanic practitioner, as well as those who are interested in or curious about shamanic healing in a more general sense. It appeals to those who are interested in authentic personal empowerment, and those who are drawn to explore and develop the intelligence of the heart from a holistic and shamanic perspective. Seasoned shamanic practitioners have an opportunity to explore new dimensions and aspects of the heart and may even open into surprisingly new territory as a result of the synergistic application of my shamanic music, drumming, and Hemi-Sync. The program will also appeal to helping professionals and those involved in the various energy medicine strategies. Please join us!

Byron Metcalf, Ph.D., Director
HoloShamanic Strategies, LLC
119 Garden Street
Prescott, AZ 86305
928-776-4590
info @ holoshamanicstrategies.org

Hemi-Sync® is a registered trademark of Interstate Industries, Inc.
© 2011 by The Monroe Institute